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STATE FOR WHA/BSC AND EB/IFD/OIA
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR LAC/AA
STATE PASS TO USTR FOR LYANG
NSC FOR SUE CRONIN
TREASURY FOR OSIA MAUREEN WAFER
TREASURY FOR OTA WARFIELD, VAN KOCH, MILLAR
COMMERCE FOR ITA SARAH COOK
SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: PARAGUAY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC UPDATE, AUGUST 19

- 25

1. (U) Summary

-- AMISRAEL March for Peace
-- ODC Sponsors Boston Trip
-- DCM Visits Yacyreta Dam and Military

AMISRAEL March for Peace

1.2. (U) AMISRAEL Paraguay, an NGO that supports Israel and peace in the Middle East, held a march for peace in Asuncion on August 23. According to Dr. William Paras Osorio of Bnai Birth, only 13 individuals participated; 12 were members of AMISRAEL and 1 was a Syrian Muslim. However, the march received a lot of media exposure. It was covered in all of the major news publications as well as radio and television. Paras told PolOff, on 8/25, that the main purpose of the march was to condemn terrorism and promote dialog that will produce a lasting peace in the region.

ODC Sponsors Boston Trip

1.3. (U) As a part of US SOUTHCOM's State Partnership Program (SPP) with the Massachusetts National Guard, 9 Paraguayans (4 military and 5 civilians) visited Boston, MA from 8/16 to 8/20 to meet with members of the Massachusetts National Guard (MANG) and MA State Legislators and officials. The purpose of the SPP is to help build military to military and civilian to civilian exchanges on issues of mutual interest and benefit. The main subjects covered included: domestic emergency management (civilian control with military support); police reform (anti-corruption and anti-auto theft); economic development; and youth programs and job creation. The Paraguayan delegation members told PolOff that the meetings were very rewarding and that they hoped to apply much of what they had learned to their work in Paraguay. Specifically, Merardo Salas, Director of Operations at the National Emergency Secretariat, stated that he especially enjoyed viewing the MA Emergency Management Agency facility

as Paraguay is in the process of developing its own systems. His experience in Boston had given him some new ideas about how best to set up Parauay's own office including the structure and computer systems. (NOTE: In September, several MANG and MA officials are planning to visit Paraguay to conduct the Paraguayan portion of the program. END NOTE.)

DCM Visits Yacyreta Dam and Military

¶4. (U) Angel Recalde, Director of the Binational Yacyreta Dam Entity, escorted the DCM during his August 24 visit to the Yacyreta Dam, located in the Misiones Department, on the Argentine-Paraguay border. Recalde informed the DCM that the Dam is owned by the Binational Entity which is equally divided between Argentina and Paraguay. However, Paraguay sells 47 percent of its unused hydroelectric power to Argentina giving Argentina Mega-watt usage of 97 percent of the dam's output. The dam satisfies as much as 20 percent of Argentina's electricity needs but only 3 percent of Paraguay's (Note: Two other hydroelectric dams provide the rest of Paraguay's needs. End Note). The dam is operated by 300 personnel (half from each country), all of whom, receive family housing (along with their salaries) for as long as they work for the Dam.

¶5. (U) The DCM also visited the Chaco Aviators Airbase located in the Itapua Department. This base consists entirely of one lone airstrip and a few scattered shacks. Fifteen soldiers are assigned to on 6-month rotations. The base has no vehicles and no aircraft. The soldiers farm the land for their food. Separately, the Air Force leases the majority of the land to local farmers for wheat and soy crops.

¶6. (U) Accompany DCM were POL, DAO (ASU) and DAO (BA) reps using the BA based C-12. Following hard on two separate AMB C-12 trips in country, this trip served another example of the utility to post of this regional resource. Post thanks BA for support on this trip.
CASON